

building **BETTER LIVES**

A Briefing Paper

Job Search Services

January 2005

What is the WorkFirst Targeted Wage Initiative?

WorkFirst's Targeted Wage Initiative (TWI) assists welfare parents obtain the best-paying entry-level jobs in their local labor markets. It is a WorkFirst partner-driven effort that includes:

- Employment-centered case management
- Targeted Job Search
- Short-term job skills enhancement training
- Connections to the employer community

What is WorkFirst Targeted Job Search?

When parents are referred to the Employment Security Department's Targeted Job Search (TJS) activities, it is a referral to intensive, personalized services that help them identify their skills and how they might fit with the local employer community. Skilled staff prepare parents to conduct effective, targeted job search leading to the highest-paying entry-level jobs they can find based on their skills and experience.

What are the services parents receive in Targeted Job Search?

Targeted Job Search lasts up to 12 weeks, during which parents are offered with the following services:

- Work skills assessment (job skills, interests and values)
- Success planning and goal setting
- Referrals to training options
- Personalized preparation in job search competencies (interviewing, resume writing, master applications, 60 second commercial, labor market information)
- Short-term job skills enhancement training
- Job matching and referrals to jobs
- Hiring events with employers
- On-the-job training opportunities
- Support services, such as transportation expenses, job search clothing or minor car repairs
- Access to and assistance in resource rooms (Internet, telephones, copiers, fax machines, etc.)
- Child care in support of job search and employment

Research shows that increasing the wages of entry-level jobs can reduce the rate of welfare parents who return to the rolls and can affect the rate at which they advance in wages.

The statewide average entry wage for TANF parents is \$8.88 an hour.

The Targeted Wage Initiative has assisted WorkFirst families in finding employment even during the recession. Parents are starting jobs that pay much more than public assistance.

More than 146,000 parents have left welfare and stayed off since the beginning of WorkFirst.

Program contact:

Glynnis Ashley
(360) 438-4063
gashley@esd.wa.gov

For more information about the WorkFirst program, visit
www.workfirst.wa.gov

**A Job,
A Better Job,
A Better Life**



